

Message Text

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41

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DRC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 SAB-01 IO-14 /108 W

----- 089451

R 201306Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2470

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

USINT DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 2737

DAMASCUS AND JERUSALEM FOR SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IS

SUBJECT: ISRAELI DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION

1. SUMMARY: WITH LABOR PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE APPROVING FORMATION 61-MEMBER COALITION GOVT, PRIME MINISTER DESIGNATE RABIN NWO FACES DIFFICUTL TASK OF FORGING CONSENSUS ON COMPOSITION NEW CABINET--A JOB MADE MORE COMPLEX BY ANNOUNCED INTENETION OF FINANCE MINISTER SAPIR NTO TO JOIN NEW GOVT AND INTENSE FACTIONAL COMPETITION FOR KEY MINISTERIAL POSTS. END SUMMARY.

2. LABOR PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE MAY 19 APPROVED (302 FOR, 36 AGAINST, SIX ABSTENTIONS) FORMATION 61-MEMBER COALTION GOVT, INCLUDING 51 ALIGNMENT, THREE ALIGNMENT-AFFILIATED ARAB AND DRUSE, FOUR INDEPENDENT LIBERALS AND THREE CITIZENS RIGHTS MOVEMENT (CRM)

KNESSET MEMBERS. LABOR PARTY RESOLUTION LEFT DOOR OPEN TO NATIONAL RELIGIOUS PARY TO JOIN COALTION IF WHO IS A JEW

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OBSTACLE CAN BE OVERCOME. THREE CABINET MINISTERSHIPS ARE TO BE

LEFT OPEN FOR NRP FOR AT LEAST THREE MONTHS.

3. CHOICE OF 61-MEMBER COALITION REPORTEDLY BASED ON REFUSAL OF INDEPENDENT LIBERALS TO JOIN WITHOUT CRM AND MAPAM THREAT TO STAY OUT UNLESS CRM INCLUDED IN COALITION. PROPOSALS FOR NATIONAL UNITY GOVT WITH LIKUD (SUPPORTED MAINLY BY EX-RAFI), FOR CONTINUATION OF CARETAKER GOVT UNTIL NEW ELECTIONS, AND FOR FURTHER EFFORTS TO INCLUDE NRP IN COALITION WERE OVERWHELMINGLY VOTED DOWN BY CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

4. ACCORDING PRESS REPORTS PREMIER-DESIGNATE RABIN TOLD CENTRAL COMMITTEE THAT NARROW COALITION COULD GOVERN WELL, ALTHOUGH ITS SURVIVAL HINGED ON LABOR PARTY UNITY. HE HOPED NRP WOULD STILL JOIN GOVT. WHILE NOT WANTING TO END LABOR'S TRADITIONAL PARTNERSHIP WITH NRP, HE DID NOT WISH HOWEVER TO SUBMIT TO ITS DEMANDS ON WHO IS A JEW, WHICH COULD DAMAGE RELATIONS WITH US JEWRY.

5. RABIN TOLD CENTRAL COMMITTEE THAT HE REJECTED COALITION WITH LIKUD BECAUSE IT WOULD HAMPER PROGRESS TOWARD PEACE SETTLEMENT, REACTING AMONG OTHER THINGS TO FACT THAT HAARETZ CORRESPONDENT MATTY GOLAN MAY 19 HAD REPORTED THAT SOURCES CLOSE TO RABIN STATED HE PLANS TO BRING LIKUD INTO COALITION AFTER NEW GOVT IS WORKING. NONETHELESS, ANOTHER WELL-INFORMED JOURNALIST AND A CLOSE ADVISER TO RABIN BOTH HAVE TOLD US THAT RABIN MAY AT SOME STAGE SEEK TO INCLUDE LIKUD IN GOVT, IN EFFORT TO MODERATE ITS STAND AND AVOID EARLY ELECTIONS, WHICH COULD HAVE DIVISIVE EFFECT ON NATION.

6. COMMENT. COMPOSITION OF CABINET IS IMMEDIATE PROBLEM FACING RABIN. SAPIR TODAY ANNOUNCED HIS INTENTION NOT TO SERVE IN NEW GOVT. MOREOVER, WE WERE TOLD TODAY THAT EBAN HAS BEEN OFFERED TO CONTINUE AS FOREIGN MINISTER AND IN ALL LIKELIHOOD WILL ACCEPT. SHARP FACTIONAL DISPUTES WILL ARISE OVER ASSIGNMENT OF KEY PORTFOLIOS, MAINLY DEFENSE AND ALSO FINANCE IF INDEED SAPIR IS NOT MEMBER OF NEW GOVT. IF RABIN CAN GET PARTY APPROVAL ON COMPOSITION NEW CABINET BEFORE MAY 24, HE WILL PRESENT GOVT FOR KNESSET APPROVAL EARLY NEXT WEEK. OTHERWISE, HE WILL HAVE TO SEEK ADDITIONAL EXTENSION OF TIME FROM PRESIDENT KATZIR TO FORM

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GOVT.
KEATING

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
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